



Clifton developed during the period of 1868 to about 1910 from the impetus of the entrepreneurial activities of a post-Civil War migrant from upstate New York, Harrison G. Otis. Otis judiciously purchased land parcels, beginning in 1868, located at a depot of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad, which ran between Gordonsville and Alexandria. The following year he became the first postmaster of the new U.S. post office named Clifton. As a result of Otis' interests in promoting land cultivation and, in general, making Clifton attractive as a local center by opening roads and building a hotel, Clifton quickly grew as a settlement. The district continued to reflect the continuing prosperity of the village as a result of lumbering, sawmill, farming, and talc mining activities. The buildings represent a well-preserved and intact example of vernacular architecture of the late 19th century and early 20th century. Clifton's streetscapes convey a distinct sense of an agricultural Virginia town at the turn of the 20th century.

[Nomination Form](#)



Clifton Historic District

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places August 15, 1985

